

THE ALMEIDA MUNICIPALITY

Interior Region's Star

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HISTORICAL CENTER OF ALMEIDA

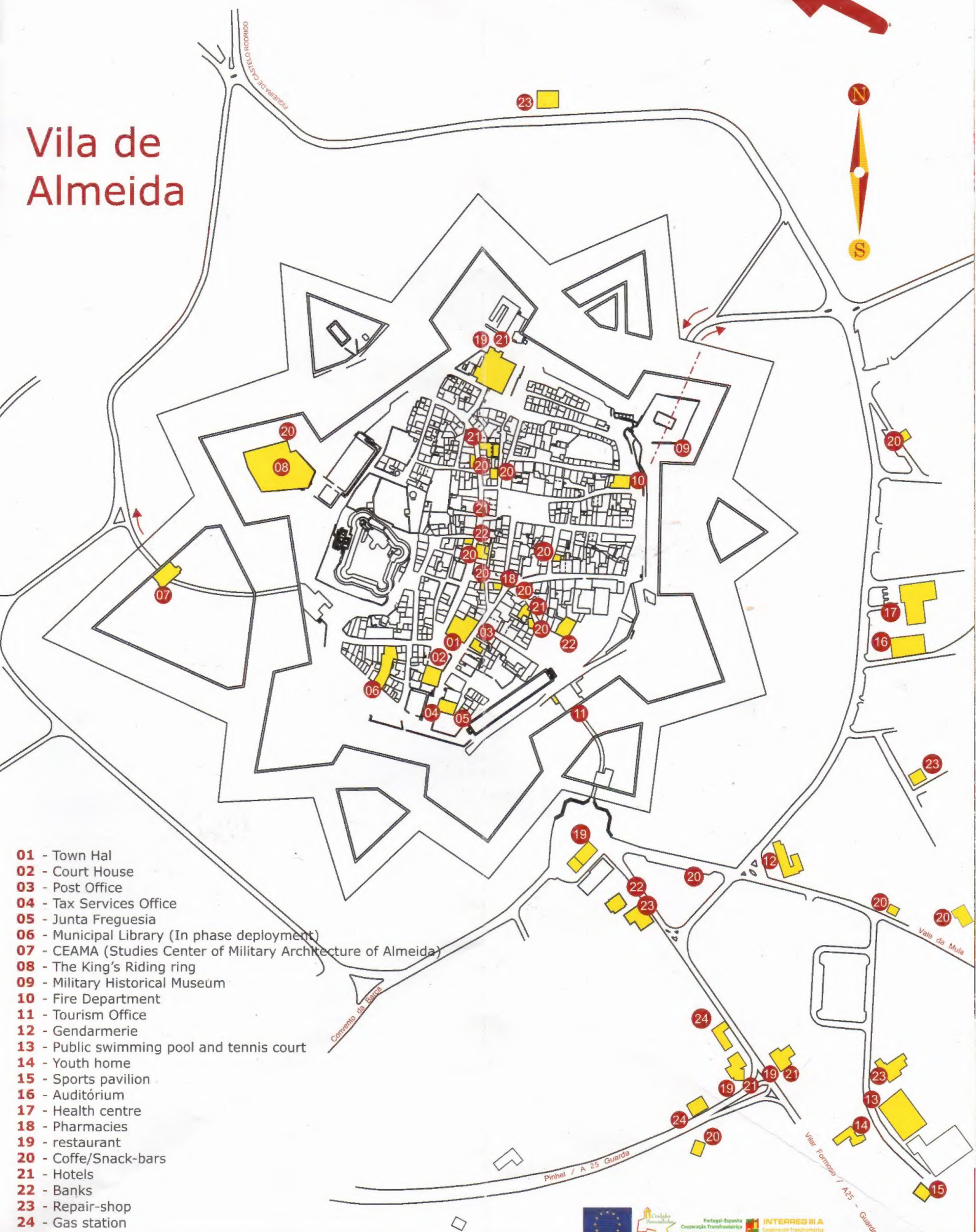


PORTUGUESE
HISTORIC
TOWNS

Fortress:

In the aftermath of the rule of the Philippine Dynasty, Almeida was faced with the need to modernize its outdated medieval defensive structures, wherefore right after the restoration of the Portuguese independence the town committed itself to the building of a renewed war machine adapted to the new fire arms and fit to seal out any kind of assaults on the integrity of the national defence. The seat of the Governo das Armas (Military Governor) of the Beira Province was set up in Almeida right after 1640, and in 1641 the works on the fortification started, involving the direct participation of engineer Lassart, although the outline of the fortified circuit has been credited to Pedro Gilles de St. Paul, according to the Antoine de Ville method. The hexagonal fortress is made up of six bulwarks (São Francisco, São Pedro, Santo António, Nossa Senhora das Brotas or Trem, Santa Bárbara and São João de Deus), to which correspond an equal number of ravelins, (Cruz, Amores, Brecha, Santo António, Paiol Doble or Hospital de Sangue). Watch-towers at all angles of the bulwark and in the middle of the curtain walls brace the defence of the citadel. The defence and the ravelins are surrounded by a moat, which besides being a means of defence also served as a basin for the waste waters drained from the fortress. Communication with the world outside the citadel was made through two main gates serving mainly civilian and public purposes or through three exclusively military posterns. The Almeida fortress played a fundamental role in the context the fortified towns of modern times as well as an extraordinary defensive role, together with the new international fortification methods that were applied. In 1927 it ceased to function as a fortress, but remains, today, a landmark in the history of Portugal.

Vila de Almeida



Delgado Freire: 18th/19th Century



Residential manor built according to a rectangular plan, gabled roof, civilian architecture. Full panelled portal flanked by four windows, grooved at the angles and the family coat of arms, decorated with late baroque ornaments. Located on the Praça Dr. José Casimiro Matias (Dr. José Casimiro Matias Square).



The building, called, 'Casa Grande' (the Big House), is a huge construction sustained by a succession of standardized openings that lack an explicit demarcation of the main entrance and to which the masonry elements lend a note of decorative richness. It belonged to António Pereira Fontão Junior, a wealthy local tradesman. Located in Rua Serpa Pinto (Serpa Pinto St.).



Civil residential architecture, it is the most asserting in architectural terms. Built after the siege in 1762. Stately facade in which the structural elements stand out, displaying simple and linear geometrical shapes.



Creator: Anastácio de Sousa e Miranda and Miguel Luis Jacob.

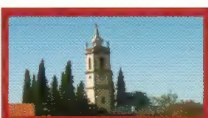
The construction of this building started in 1791, on the grounds where the former market porches were located, it is the only construction built from the outset for military purposes. It is one of the most symbolic buildings of the fortress and also the most monumental Guard Corps. Characterized by the austerity of the outline, its facade displays a triple arch porch with toscan order pilasters. Today it is the Câmara Municipal (City Hall) of Almeida and is located on the Praça da Liberdade (Liberdade Square).



Authors: Colonel Engineer António Velho de Azevedo (Conjectural) and Sergeant-Major Engineer Miguel Luis Jacob.

In typological terms it is a two-storey building, military administrative and residential architecture, with a square ground plan and four-gabled roof. The Inspectorate General, part of the military equipment, was in charge of the financial management of the Fortresses. The adaptation works to transform it into the Governor's home, mainly of a functional and representative character, were not significant and were carried out by Miguel Luis Jacob. Of these works only the platebands remain today. Today it is the Palácio da Justiça (Court House). Located on the República Square.

13 - Clock tower: 1830



Located in the area of the castle and on the spot where earlier stood the Igreja Matriz de Nossa Senhora das Candelas (Nossa Senhora das Candelas Parish Church), the Clock Tower stands out in the urban mesh. It has a square shape and four bell windows that can be reached through an interior wooden staircase. Expressing symmetry and homogeneity, swinging between the neoclassical sobriety and the baroque exotics. Located in the former Cemitério da Vila (Town Cemetery).

15 - House of Field Marshal Manuel Lealão de Carvalho/The Ladies Palace. Late 17th Century first quarter of the 18th Century.



Civil residential architecture in typological terms, regular make up with two doors on the ground floor and two windows on the first floor framing the family coat of arms, decorated with baroque ornaments. Located in the Combatentes Mortos pela Pátria Street.

18 - Old Public Square 20th Century



This space locally known as the 'Terreiro Velho' ('Old Public Square') refers to the old market porches on the Praça Velha (Old Square), where the Câmara Municipal (City Hall) now stands. Located in the Combatentes Mortos pela Pátria St.

21 - Squadron barracks: 18th Century (1736-1750)



Two-storey building, rectangular elongated ground plan, four-gabled roof and pyramid shaped chimney's on the ridge. The construction is made up of two juxtaposed elements setting very long and rhythmical elevations. The interior is made up of 21 transverse modules, subdivided into two tent shaped sheds which served as accommodation for the Infantry soldiers. Located on the República Square.

12 - Almeida Castle: 13th-14th / 16th Century



The present ruins of the Almeida Castle, a consequence of an explosion which occurred on the 26th of August 1810 (3rd French invasion), show a square, irregular ground plan, surrounded by a paved moat and masonry counter-scarp, showing the foundation of 4 circular towers at its angles. The works carried out in 1695 deactivated the outdated 15th Century castle, with its donjon and internal band of walls, transforming the donjon into an ammunition and gunpowder depot.

22 - Misericórdia Church - 17th Century



Building with an (irregular) long rectangular ground plan and gabled roof. The two juxtaposed elements correspond in spatial terms to the side paved and wooden roofed nave and the Lady-chapel, delimited by the masonry triumph arch and flanked by two gilded 19th Century altar-pieces. The church was addressed to the former Hospital now Lar da Misericórdia (Misericórdia Home). Located on the Praça da República (República Square).

11 - Santo António Gate: 17th Century



Identical to the São Francisco Gate in structural terms, albeit more monumental and with a more distinguished outline. Curved shape, bomb-proof roof, Guard house on the side, fire place, latrines and sinks. The floor of the magisterial gate was made of wooden planks and on its sides there were two guard houses.



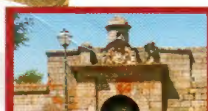
Building of rectangular plan and covering of two waters. It presents a facade marked for the courtyard of four arches. In the centre of composition it is blazon with the arms of Portugal.

24 - House of the General Butler



The South-eastern facade is organized in four modules. It presents a symmetrical composition and rectilinear organization, shaped by four veins in each floor. The noble floor presents in the centre the coat of arms.

1 - São Francisco or Cruz Double Doors, 17th Century



Double fortress gates inserted in the middle of the curtain wall, forced to supplant the moat and to cross the ravelin. Each of the gates is shaped as a full arch. With Guard Houses on the sides of the Gates with accommodations for the officer, a fireplace, fenced openings towards the esplanade or to the town, embrasures in the walls and bomb-proof roofs. It was in the Magisterial Gate that the British Commissariat was set up in the 19th Century.

2 - Former Nossa Senhora do Loreto Convent / Barracks and military hospital 16th/18th/19th/20th Century. As present it is the Igreja Matriz Parish Church



Convento de Freiras Terceiras Regulares de São Francisco Convent of the Contemplative Nuns of the Third Order Regular of Saint Francis devoted to Our Lady of Loreto, it dates from the early 16th Century. Its ground plan was originally U-shaped and the building was developed around a square cloister. What is left of the old convent shows an L-shaped ground plan which corresponds to the church (at present the Parish Church) that underwent modifications in the 18th Century. Next to the triumphal arch is the Capela do Menino Jesus (Baby Jesus Chapel), of which remains only one portal (built by Dantas da Cunha, in 1699). Located in Joaquim Carvalho dos Santos St.

10 - The King's Riding Ring 17th Century with artillery-train (Conjectural) 20th Century (adapted as a riding ring)



The present Almeida Riding Ring has undergone many functional adaptations since its creation. Originally an artillery-train with numerous forges for the manufacture and repair of war equipment. It also functioned as barracks and as Artillery Detachment Barracks. During the second half of the 19th Century it became totally deteriorated. Of the original structures the following remain: The portal crowned by the royal arms, the building with the manger, the circular wall and the lateral walls and buttresses. Located on the Baluarte de Nossa Senhora das Brotas (Nossa Senhora das Brotas Bulwark).

7 - Upper Square



Located on the Baluarte de Santa Bárbara (Santa Bárbara Bulwark) it comprises 23 embrasures, the Upper Square with a gun platforms on the flanks and a low battery for launching mortars.

4 - Casemate: 17th/18th/19th Century (conjectural)



Located in the subsoil of the Baluarte de São João de Deus (São João de Deus bulwark), the casemates on the old barracks as they were called in the old days due to the lack of accommodations for the infantry, are made up of twenty underground houses built as a full vault of which only three lack a ventilation tunnel. Their functionality was linked to two main aspects, peace and war. They were used to lodge the inhabitants and to store provisions. As regards water supply it had a water tank and a well.

6 - Nossa Senhora das Neves (Country-house Hotel) 1971-1987



This hotel projected by Cristiano Moreira, is located on the spot where the former Santa Bárbara e Asento de Pão de Munição Barracks were located. Built in the 70's it seeks to stand out from the urban agglomerate through its combination of elements. Located in the Rua das

5 - House of the Exposed/Unwanted Babies 19th Century (dated 1843)



Founded by Intendant Pina Manique in the 19th Century, these houses played an important social role. Strategically located next to a postern, it is a one storey (originally two storey) building with a square ground plan paved with pebbles. Today it is the museum core. Located in Muralhas St.

3 - Stately Home 17th/18th Century (conjectural)



Two-storey building, without decorative extravagances, it follows the typology of a stately home. The central axis is strengthened by the balcony window and a portal showing an even frame and a broad lintel. Located in the Pogo St.

9 - Guard house locker 19th Century



The lockers are located in the Santa Bárbara and Paol revelins.

8 - Doble Ravelin - Field Hospital 18th Century



Doble Ravelin, Vaubanian influence, thus designated for contributing a double structure. From the technical point of view it is one of the most perfect bulwarks as it 'enables to draw all the fire from the front of the flanking bulwarks thus covering all flanks'. It displays a vaulted construction on the ground said to have served as a magazine. The drawbridge (recreated) established the connection between the fortification and the cemetery, where some gravestones still can be seen.